

# King County Travel Manual



## Contact Us

Department of Executive Services  
Finance & Business Operations Division  
Procurement & Payables Section  
401 Fifth Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

(206) 263-9400



**King County**

Updated 4/26/16

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## INTRODUCTION

This Travel Manual describes King County’s travel rules and regulations. These general guidelines and procedures ensure accountability and fiscal responsibility. The Procurement and Payables Section (P&P) is responsible for administering and monitoring travel related expense reimbursements.

Transportation and hotel costs can be paid with:

1. Travel Cards (T-Cards) — *preferred*
2. Employee Reimbursements
3. Travel Advances

## TRAVEL CARDS

Travel Cards are the preferred method of payment for transportation and lodging. T-Cards save approximately \$70 in processing costs for *each* purchase.

T-Cards are issued at the department or division level. Access to the card should be limited to the department’s Travel Card Coordinator. Charges are processed for payment in Oracle’s iExpense module by the Travel Card Coordinator.

## EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENTS

King County employees may pay for hotels, meal costs, and other travel related expenses using personal funds while in travel status. After travel is complete, the employee may be reimbursed for allowable business expenses using iExpense. Original receipts are required for all expense reimbursements, except for meals.

## TRAVEL ADVANCES

County employees may request a cash advance for anticipated expenses they will incur while traveling on King County business. All receipts are required to be turned in within 15 days upon return, except for meals.

If actual expenses exceed the amount of the advance, the County will reimburse the difference. If the advance exceeds the amount of travel expenses, the employee must reimburse the County within 15 days upon return or be subject to accruing interest to the traveler.

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## TYPES OF TRANSPORTATION

### AIR TRAVEL



All air travel must be approved in advance. The King County Travel Card is the preferred method of payment. Use of personal funds is strongly discouraged for airfare.

Airfare may be purchased directly from the airlines, online third party vendors, or from a travel agent listed in the [state contract](#). Trip insurance is encouraged.

### CANDIDATE TRAVEL

Candidate travel (airfare and lodging) may be paid using a travel card following the same travel rules as employees (PER 17-1-3, section 6.1.2).

Non-employee travel will not be reimbursed through iExpense; instead, please submit these directly to King County Accounts Payable 401 5th Ave, Room 323, Seattle, WA 98104 MS: CNK-ES-0323

### MOTOR POOL

For local travel, a County car is preferred. Use the [King County Vehicle Reservation System](#).

### MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

If you're driving your own vehicle, you may be reimbursed for mileage, toll charges, and reasonable parking charges. Receipts are required. See the IRS website for current mileage rates at <http://www.currentmileage.com/>

Mileage expense reports must indicate the starting and ending addresses, amount, and date. Submit your reimbursement request in iExpense. Anytime an expense report is only for mileage (where no receipts are required), the hard copy of the expense report must be sent in to Accounts Payable to kick off the review and payment process.

Mileage cannot be claimed when renting vehicle or using a county Motor Pool vehicle.

### LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Local transportation (taxi, rental car, bus, train, etc.) must be pre-approved and include detailed receipts. Receipts must indicate the starting and ending addresses, amount, and date.

Note: Tips and gratuities are not reimbursable. (PER 17-1-2, 6.8.1K)

## MEALS & INCIDENTALS



### MEALS

Meal allowances are calculated using the [federal General Services Administration \(GSA\) standards](#) (use the reimbursable limits for your location).

The meal reimbursement rates are built into the iExpense module using the "Per Diem" tab.

When meals are provided by the hotel or by the conference, they do *not* qualify for reimbursement.

NOTE: GSA includes incidentals with meals. However, incidental rates in iExpense are listed separately using the “cash and other expenses” screen. The rates in iExpense are correct – they are for the meal portion only.

## INCIDENTALS

Incidentals are pro-rated at the same percentage as meals. If no meals are claimed that day, no incidentals are paid. Incidentals are not allowed when employee is *not* in travel status (local travel).

King County uses the GSA rates and prorates the incidentals at: 20% Breakfast, 30% Lunch, and 50% Dinner. For example, for a \$5 incidental:

If all 3 meals are claimed, you may claim the full \$5.

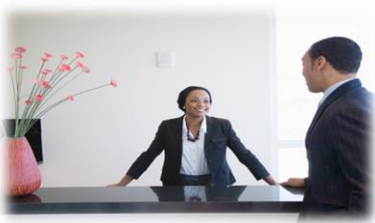
If breakfast and dinner is claimed you may claim \$3.50.

If only Breakfast is claimed, you can only claim \$1 (20%) of the incidental for the day.

The incidental rates should be processed as an expense based on receipts provide for each day.

## LODGING

### HOTELS



Always book hotels using the “Government Rate.”

Travel cards are the preferred method of payment. When using a T-Card, hotels often request a credit card authorization form provided in advance by the hotel. Advance deposits may be placed on a T-Card.

Any hotel expense in excess of the [GSA approved per diem rates](#) requires justification and an additional

signed exception memo from your Director, presiding elected official or delegate. Include the name, telephone number and rate of three establishments contacted for government lodging rates.

The traveler is responsible for any charges in excess of pre-approved amounts and for personal expenses.

Per Diem rates are based on the hotel’s “per day” rate. If hotel rates fluctuate the employee may be responsible for out of pocket over per diem rates. Using a T-Card protects employees.

All hotel receipts, including internet bookings, must be itemized by day. When processing an expense report for a hotel stay, the stay must be itemized by day, or “per diem.”

## EXPENSE TYPES

When creating your expense report, destinations depend on which expense type is selected.

CONUS — hotel rates within the continental United States. This code is for U.S. locations.

OCONUS — hotel rates *outside* the continental United States.

## RECEIPTS



### Reimbursement or Travel Advance Receipts

Original receipts must be submitted to Accounts Payable by either interoffice or in person.

Expenses will only be reimbursed, if the original receipts are attached. Brochures, itineraries, hotel bills, receipts, and prior authorizations must be attached to your

expense reports. Please print your expense report cover sheet in *landscape*.

Meals and Mileage are the only expenses that do not require accompanying receipts.

#### **Travel Card Receipts**

Receipts for T-Card purchases are kept by your department T-Card Coordinator. All travel pre-approvals, brochures, itineraries, hotel bills and prior authorizations must be kept for six years.

### **OTHER EXPENSES**

#### **EXTENDED PERSONAL STAY**

If you extend your business trip for personal reasons, any additional cost is your responsibility.

#### **TRAVELING WITH A COMPANION**

When travelling with a companion that is not an employee, additional costs for the companion must be paid using personal funds.

#### **AIRLINE BAGGAGE FEES**

Airline baggage fees are reimbursed with an itemized and dated receipt. No receipt? You may use a bank statement highlighting the baggage fee.

#### **TELEPHONE CALLS OR INTERNET USE**

Telephone calls or internet usage are not reimbursable unless they are related to County business. The traveler must initial each call or internet usage to be reimbursed on the hotel bill.

#### **AIRPORT PARKING**

Employees should use public transportation (using your ID badge/Orca card) to the airport to avoid airport parking fees whenever practical.

If you are unable to take public transit and airport parking is unavoidable, itemized receipts must indicate the amount, date, and location.

If a companion drops an employee off at the airport, the mileage is only reimbursed one way.

### **TRAVELERS' WAY OF DOING THINGS**



Always ask yourself, **“What is cheapest for the County and our taxpayers?”**

- Instead of a cab or rental car, try to find an airport shuttle that will take you to your destination.
- Use your King County Orca card to get to and from the airport to avoid costly airport parking.
- Purchasing tickets directly from the airline or using a third party vendor can be cheaper than going through the state contract. Trip insurance is recommended.
- Keep all of your receipts (except for meals and mileage). Accounts Payable or your Travel Card Coordinator will need them to reconcile expense reports.



## STEPS FOR TRAVELER (REQUESTING TRAVEL)

### Notes for Submitter/Traveler

When submitting a travel packet for T-Card expenses, email all documents in editable formats to the Travel Card Coordinator, in case there are modifications.

When submitting a travel packet for Accounts Payable reimbursement, please interoffice mail the original hard copy documents along with the printed iExpense report.

## YOUR TRAVEL PACKET

1. The **Travel Memo** outlines states both the purpose of the trip and the expected benefits.

 **King County**  
Finance & Business  
Operations Division  
Department of Executive Services  
401 Fifth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104  
Phone 206-263-9258  
Fax 206-296-7670  
[www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov)

March 22, 1940

TO: James Dean, Director, Department

FM: Greta Garbo, Director, Finance and Business Operations Division

RE: Travel Authorization

Please approve the attached Travel Authorization request for:

Frank Sinatra, Buyer  
Washing State Chapter of NIGP - Sourcing in the Public Sector  
Yakima, WA  
April 25-27, 2016

Purpose of the trip and how it relates to the employee's work assignment:  
This is an important educational and networking opportunity.

Statement about the expected benefits:  
The benefit to King County from this conference is to have a highly trained staff that is aware of current issues and policies that affect procurement and to learn how to navigate the sourcing process, increase the understanding of the critical issues that frame the concept of public sector sourcing, and discuss future sourcing challenges.

Statement of whether an alternative approach could have achieved the same results:  
This is an annual forum and an alternative is not available.

If travel request is less than four weeks prior to departure provide brief explanation:  
n/a

Thank you for your review and consideration of the enclosed travel authorization request. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Lucille Ball, at 206.555.1234 or Audrey Hepburn at 206.555.4321.

Enclosed: (List out all attachments)

- Travel Pre-Authorization
- Travel Authorization Request Form
- Per Diem and Rates
- Conference Agenda
- Hotel

- If either a travel pre-authorization or cash advance is requested, the employee must sign the form.
- The lodging rate does not include taxes and fees.

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3. **Authorization for Lodging Exceeding Federal Rate memo**  
(only if exceeding Per Diem Lodging rates)

 **King County**  
**Finance & Business**  
**Operations Division**  
Department of Executive Services  
410 Fifth Avenue  
MS: CNK-ES-0300  
Seattle, WA 98104  
Phone: 206-263-9258  
Fax: 206-296-7670  
www.kingcounty.gov

*December 19, 2014*

TO:

FR:

RE: Authorization for Lodging Exceeding Federal Rate

In accordance with King County policy PER 17-1-3 (AEP), approval is hereby requested for accommodations with a lodging rate that exceeds the current federal lodging rate for travel described on the attached "Request for Travel Authorization."

The GFOA has a list of 15 hotels within a 10-15 minute walk to the convention center, but they do not offer a per diem lodging rate. The benefit of staying near the conference hotel is increased networking opportunities and convenience to attend the workshops without travel time and expenses.

Alternate lodging within the federal lodging limit is not available within a reasonable distance of the event site.


Thank you for your consideration of this request.

APPROVED:

<i>Name, Section manager</i>		<i>Date</i>
<i>County Administrative Officer</i>		<i>Date</i>

4. **Travel Authorization Request Form** (only if out of State)

- 4 week policy requirement only applies for travel that Deputy Executive for Operations approves

OUT OF STATE/OVERNIGHT TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST	
	
Employee Name: _____	Department: _____ <u>Executive</u>
<u>Services</u>	
Division: _____	Date: _____
Travel-related expenses are within the established per diem rate per host city as published annually in 41CFR §301, App. A (waiver is required if per diem limits associated with this travel will be exceeded).	
Yes	
<small>* Note: this is a cover sheet to assist with authorization judgment and tracking. Please provide all necessary back up materials and follow all usually prescribed processes in addition to this.</small>	
Travel to: _____	Included in annual travel plan: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Departure Date: _____	Return Date: _____
Name of Conference or Event Associated with Travel Request: <u>Northwest Environmental Conference/Sustainable Purchasing</u>	
Pursuant to Executive Office directive, authorized travel must meet at least one of the following criteria: Travel & other costs associated with this conference or event are paid by an entity other than King County.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendee is making a formal presentation at the conference or event, representing King County.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendee is a participating member of the professional board or other organization hosting the event, and the attendance is required for board membership, and the membership is served in official (King County) Capacity	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at the conference or event has been specifically requested by the King County Executive.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at the conference or event is required to retain professional certifications that are required to fulfill the terms of employment with King County, and equivalent training cannot be obtained locally.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at the conference or event has been deemed to be of critical importance to the mission and operations of the department, and there is only one person attending on behalf of the department (this one requires additional documentation to make the case for why it is considered "critical.")	
In addition, the following test must be met for conferences and events that require overnight stays:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Request was submitted at least 4 weeks prior to the proposed travel date (this is a policy requirement).	
Division Director's Approval to Submit to Dept. Director	Approved Denied _____ Date
Department Director	Approved Denied _____ Date
County Executive or Designee	Approved Denied _____ Date

## 5. Per Diem and Rates

- Include screenshots of the following:
  - i. Per Diem Lodging and Meals
    - <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/101518>
  - ii. Flights
  - iii. Hotels
  - iv. Rental Car and Map
  - v. Private Vehicle Driving Map and Rates
- If applicable, include the agenda for conference with any complimentary meals highlighted and registration forms.
- In order to book your flight your Travel Card Coordinator will need the following personal information:
  1. Full name exactly as it appears on your driver's license
  2. Birthdate
  3. Miles program number if applicable
  4. Optional (window or isle preference)
  5. POETA to charge back when doing the expense report

## Notes for Travel Coordinator:

- As soon as the packet is submitted to the coordinator:
  - Call the preferred hotel and make a 100% refundable reservation if possible.
    - When making the reservation, ask the front desk to email a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Authorization Form.
  - Also look into if there is an early bird conference registration date.
- Call one of our travel agents, give them the travel dates, location, rough timeline and ask what the government rates AND what the non-fundable rates would be.
  - Only the travel agent can look up the government rates.
  - Government rates are always refundable.
  - Price check online.
  - If the government rate and non-refundable rates are comparable, book/reserve the flight.
  - Other perks of using the travel agents are 24/service – traveler can call the agent if there are any issues, need a new flight etc.

## TRAVEL CHECKLIST FOR TRAVEL CARD COORDINATOR

Yes	No	N/A	
			Electronic packet?
			Is the preferred hotel refundable?
			If yes, is it booked?
			Government rate?
			3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Authorization form requested?
			Standard naming conventions followed?
			Travel dates at least 4 weeks out?
			Memo included?
			Travel Pre-Authorization form included?
			Lodging Exceeds Per Diem Memo included?
			Travel Authorization Request Form included?
			Per Diem and rates included?
			Lodging and Meals
			Flights
			Hotel
			Rental Car
			Maps
			Agenda included?
			Extra leg of personal travel?
			Airfare estimate for regular travel days and planned travel days
			Do they know they pay the difference?
			POETA Provided?
			Personal information to book flight provided?
			Full name exactly as it appears on driver's license
			Birthdate
			Miles program number if applicable
			Flight preferences (dates, times, window/isle etc.)
			Price check flights?
			Government rate through travel agent comparable?
			Flight booked?
			Signatures?
			3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Authorization form faxed to Hotel? (Recommend calling the hotel to confirm)
			Conference Registration?
			Confirm flight with travel agent?
			Hotel reserved?
			Rental car reserved?
			All travel receipts, confirmations, itineraries etc. forwarded to traveler?
			Scan a copy of the entire signed travel package for your records and return the original to the traveler (expect do not share the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Authorization form)

**Commented [PL1]:** A checklist is nice, but it needs to match the manual. Clean it up, simplify. Go in chronological order.

**Commented [PL2]:** Font doesn't match the rest of the document

**Commented [PL3]:** Is this really the primary question? Shouldn't it be, "Is the hotel room reserved?" followed by secondary questions such as, "is it refundable?"

**Commented [PL4]:** What is this? I don't think you talked about this in the manual.

**Commented [PL5]:** What is this question really asking? Do you need to include proof of price checks with the packet, or is this something extra?

**Commented [PL6]:** Is this a repeat of above?

**Commented [PL7]:** Why not? What's this for, then?

## GLOSSARY

### Approver

An individual designated by a Department or Division Director as responsible for reviewing and approving the Cardholder's transaction charges. Approvers are linked to Organizations codes within POETA assigned to Expense Reports by Cardholders.

### Billing Cycle

The period between billings, the T-Card billings “cycle” on or around the 15th of each month.

### Cardholder Single-Purchase Limit

This limit restricts the amount of any single purchase made by a cardholder. It can be comprised of single or multiple items purchased at one time at a single supplier.

### Delegate

A delegate is another P-Card holder who has been delegated responsibilities to create Expense Reports on behalf of a Proxy who is out of the office for an extended period of time.

### Travel Card Coordinator

The individual assigned as the focal point at the designated department level that is responsible for coordinating travel, ensuring travel packets and preauthorizations are complete.

### Accounts Payable

King County Accounts Payable (A/P) is the Designated Finance Office.

### Expense Report

A report detailing Cardholder’s weekly transactions.

### iExpense

iExpense is a module within Oracle where all employees process reimbursements by submitting an electronic Expense Report. P-Card and Travel Card transactions are uploaded from US Bank to iExpense and are processed on “Expense Reports.”

### Travel Card

The official Agency credit card that is used for hotel and airfare. The cards are issued at the Department or Division level and managed by the Travel Card (T-Card) Coordinator.

### Oracle®

This is King County's centralized accounts receivable software system.

### Partially Paid

iExpense is an employee reimbursement module within Oracle, so in order to process payments to US Bank, it issues 2 “checks”; one is issued to the iExpense user for \$0, and one is issued to the bank for the actual Expense Report amount

### Pending Payables Approval

When an incorrect template is chosen for Travel Card transactions or policy violations exist in the Expense Report reports fall into a review process. The P-Card team will audit reports that fall into this status.

### Pending System Administrator

Approval status that reflects the POETA (account coding) that was used does not have an approver tied to the ORG, or cost center. Contact your SPOC to get the approver linked to the P-Card template in iExpense.

### Proxy

Proxy is a P-Card holder who delegates their responsibilities for creating Expense Reports to a Delegate if they are going on an extended leave.

### POETA

Project, Organization, Expenditure Type, Task, Award (POETA), is the acronym for King County’s centralized, project centric method of accounting. Project is the project number. Organization number has dual purposes, it denotes the “cost center” and is also number the Approver is tied to. Expenditure type indicates the type of expenditure (furniture, office supplies, etc.). Task is the part of a project where the expenditure is associated. Award is used only if an award or grant is associated with the project.

P-Card Program Manager

The individual who occupies a position in the King County Procurement and Contracts Services Section. The P-Card Program Manager acts as a designee of the Director of Finance and Business Operations Division and is the official point of contact for the King County P-Card Program who is responsible for all aspects of the program administration and implementation. The P-Card Program Manager also serves as a Coordinator in communication with the Card Provider.

P-Card Program Administrator

The individual(s) who serves as a resource for Cardholders, Approvers, and SPOC’s.

Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

Single Point of Contact (SPOC) is designated at the Department or Division level. SPOCs are the Approving Manager for Cardholders and Approvers with a County agency (business unit). The SPOC determines who will receive cards, Oracle user responsibilities, who will be Approvers, and which POETA they are linked to.

Travel Card Accounts

Travel Card Accounts (Ghost Cards) are accounts used specifically for transportation related expenses. These card accounts are issued to departments and managed by a Travel Card Coordinator. The King County P-Card will not be used for this purpose.

Unauthorized Purchase

Purchases that exceed preset dollar limits or velocity limits, or are made to vendors outside preset Merchant Category Code(s) (MCCs), or are otherwise indicated in this manual.

Unauthorized Use

The use of a King County P-Card by a person other than the Cardholder, who has no actual, implied, or apparent authority for such use.

US Bank

US Bank has the current contract with the State of Washington to provide P-Card and payment services.

US Bank Access Online

Online banking portal.

User Productivity Kit

[User Productivity Kit \(UPK\)](#) - Step-by-step direction on "How to use iExpense".

Velocity Limit

Number of transactions allowed, usually 8 per day and 30 per month, set by US Bank.